

In the end, we will meet again

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[Major Character Death](#)

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[Dead Poets Society \(1989\)](#)

Relationships:

[Todd Anderson/Neil Perry](#), [John Keating & Neil Perry](#), [Richard Cameron & Neil Perry](#), [Neil Perry & Gerard Pitts](#), [Knox Overstreet & Neil Perry](#), [Steven Meeks & Neil Perry](#), [Charlie Dalton & Neil Perry](#), [Todd Anderson & Neil Perry](#), [Neil Perry & The Poets](#), [Neil Perry & his parents](#)

Characters:

[Neil Perry \(Dead Poets Society\)](#), [Todd Anderson](#), [Charlie Dalton](#), [Knox Overstreet](#), [Steven Meeks](#), [Gerard Pitts](#), [Richard Cameron](#), [Neil's parents](#), [John Keating](#)

Additional Tags:

[Implied/Referenced Suicide](#), [goodbye letters](#), [Implied/Referenced Self-Harm](#), [Neil is still dead I'm sorry :\(](#), [angst and no comfort](#), [Sad Ending](#), [Canon Compliant](#), [Canonical Character Death](#), [Someone hug Neil](#), [everyone needs a hug basically](#), [I love writing heartbreaking stuff](#), [Other Additional Tags to Be Added](#), [mentions of depression](#), [Mentions of Anxiety](#)

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by [joeytribbiani_18](#)

Summary

Goodbye letters from Neil to the most important people in his life.

Chapter 1: Father

Chapter Summary

Might edit a bit in the future, but yeah:(

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Dear father,

I've never meant to disobey you. I've never meant to be a disappointment, to be someone you'll be ashamed of. I've always wanted to be the perfect son, to be a pride in your eyes. But I know that'll never happen. So I have to go before I'll disappoint you more.

I loved our tiny moments together when I was a kid. When you taught me everything you knew, everything your father never taught you. You wanted me to do well in life, to have all necessary skills, to take opportunities you never had. I'll be forever grateful for everything you and mom did for me. I had a roof over my head, food to eat, clothes to wear, good school to attend to and gain the best education. And I'm sorry that at the end of the day, it doesn't even matter. It doesn't matter if I can't do what I really dream about, if I'm deprived of one thing that made sense.

I loved acting. I never told you how much I admired it. I was so close to telling you, but when you looked at me with that stern glare I got so used to, I couldn't squeeze a word out of myself. I didn't tell you what I truly feel. I said 'nothing', and honestly, I think it's not that far from the truth. Right now, I feel nothing. I don't feel happiness or joy, or love, but I also don't feel any pain and sorrow anymore. I'm completely drained of emotions, and I don't know if it's a good or bad thing. I feel like I should feel something, I should be scared of what I'm about to do, but I'm not. This makes everything easier. The thought that in a few moments I'll be free is somewhat relaxing, even.

I think you always knew I was different. You always knew that I'm not someone you wanted me to be, so you pushed me even more, put all of your expectations on my shoulders, not realizing that their weight is too much for me to carry. But I did everything you told me, I was a star orbiting around your planet, wishing to just break free from your orbit. And when I got the part in a play, it felt like it, it felt like breaking free. Finally having something for myself, something that doesn't have your

name written all over it. I became my own entity, drifting in the universe of dreams and possibilities that were just a reach of a hand from me. But then you found out, and once again I felt trapped. Trapped without a chance to set myself free. This is my last attempt at getting out.

I still love you, dad. Even if you're partially the reason I'm doing this right now, and yes, I know I shouldn't say this, but you didn't raise me to be a liar. Maybe if you were different, or maybe if I were different, less of a coward who can't admit his true feelings, I could be happy. But I know I'll never find peace and joy in the life you crafted for me. This would happen sooner or later, so I want to save you all the pain and hurt, and just go until I leave thicker roots in this world. I love you despite all that happened between us, despite what I'm planning to do. I love you, and I'm sorry to disappoint you again. I hope one day you'll look at the sky and think that maybe I didn't do everything wrong. That maybe there was some worth in me.

I forgive you, and can only beg for your forgiveness. Take care of mom.

In the end, we will meet again.

*Your prodigal son,
Neil*

Neil's father let the letter slip from his fingers and drop at the smooth surface of the desk. The office was silent, but he could still hear the sound of the gunshot ringing in his ears. He still saw thick smoke hanging in the air. In his hands, he still felt Neil's cold body, dripping in blood, no sign of his beautiful boy in the frozen posture.

He squeezed his eyes shut, and put his head in his palms. He sobbed uncontrollably. He will never forgive himself for this.

Chapter End Notes

I know this one is short, but next ones will be longer, I promise.

I'm so sorry in advance. It will get even more angsty.

:(

Also, please remember that suicide is never the answer. If you're feeling depressed or suicidal, please seek professional help. My words may not be comforting to you, but you are loved, you matter, and it will get better. It may take some time, but it will be

better, I promise. I didn't intend this work to be an inspiration to everyone; the complete opposite: to show how tragic suicide is. Please, remember how worthy you are, how beautiful, and how amazing, even if you don't realize it right now. We all have your back <3

Suicide and emotional crisis prevention hotlines in Poland (my country): 116123, 116 111, 800 080 222, 89 19288 or 89 527 0000, 800 70 2222

If you're in need, please check hotlines available in your country.

Chapter 2: Mom

Chapter Summary

Tw: old homophobic term (we all know who says it)

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Dear mom,

I still remember one of the best days of my life. It was the day you took me to see one of the Shakespeare plays in the local theater. I was nine, and I wanted to see Hamlet, but you said I was too young, so we went to watch Twelfth Night. I remember being so enamored by the atmosphere of the place, all those people sitting and waiting impatiently for the play to start, exchanging gossip on the actors and theater's funds and all that. I didn't listen to them, I was too excited to focus on anything except the stage. And you. You were holding my hand and smiling widely at my excitement. And when lights finally went down, music started playing and actors appeared on stage, I was in trance. I fell in love with theater. I imagined myself on that wooden estrade, dressed in the most extravagant costumes and reciting lines with so much fervor and emotion that everyone in the audience would go speechless. What the actors did on that stage felt like magic and I wanted to taste at least a little bit of that magic. I wanted to drink a handful of this ambrosia, the drink of gods, I wanted to feel like one of them, to be one of them. That day I felt like my whole life I had been captured in the darkness, and suddenly the light shone over my head. I found my passion, my love, my destiny. I looked at you, and you seemed as amazed as me. You squeezed my hand and shot me one of your warmest smiles.

'Did you enjoy this, honey?' you asked me. I smiled a toothless smile, and shouted: 'Yes, mom! I loved it. I want to do this one day too'. Your smile seemed to falter a little bit, but I didn't pay much attention to it, I was too caught up in emotions. I wanted to jump, to scream, to run around the place and exclaim my favorite parts from the play. You had to hold me by the shoulders to calm me down before going home. When we got back, I told father about our day and how much I adored theater. He was angry, he told me that theater is a foolish thing and not a serious job. He said something about it not being manly too, and that men who do plays are fairies and I should not look up to people like them. I didn't understand what he meant by then, why being a fairy is a bad thing?, I thought. In

books, poems and plays, fairies were so much fun. I realized what he meant when I grew up. Whenever I did something that wasn't masculine enough for him, he would say to stop acting like a fairy, because he won't have something like that as a son. By the time I spent having him as a father, I wasn't surprised anymore that he says things like that. I wasn't surprised that he won't let me plan my own life, choose my own extracurriculars or even my own hobbies. And I think I also stopped being surprised when you didn't react to the things he did. When I was a kid, I couldn't understand why you weren't saying anything. Why weren't you defending me? I knew what rules defined our world, but they never made any sense to me. But I guess at some point I stopped expecting you to do anything, because I knew you wouldn't. I knew you would never say or do anything against him. You would always be an instrument in his hands, strings between his fingers, and you let him play his tune. Still, last night, I hoped you would say something. Something that would spark a flame in my chest to stand up to him for once. To tell him how I really feel. But when I saw you sink in yourself like you always do, squeeze your lips tight, when I heard you say that I should go to sleep, you dragged me with you. We've both been drowning for years, separately, but because of the same reason. And finally, I joined you in this underwater dance, but unlike you, I can't go on living while drowning at the same time. There are only two ways: getting out of the water or letting the waves carry me with them. And I don't have the strength to try getting back.

I don't blame you. Maybe I should, but I don't. I get why you'd never said anything to him. I don't fully understand it, and obviously I can't accept it, but I don't blame you for it. I know what world we live in. I know that you have a good heart, but it is not a world for the meek, especially when you're a woman. I hope one day it would be more understanding, or you would find the courage to change things I didn't have. To stand up for yourself. For both of us.

I'm sorry mom. I'm so, so sorry. I hope you'll forgive me for this one day. I've never wanted to hurt you, but you know I can't do this anymore. I think that, subconsciously, you always knew. You always knew who I was, who I wanted to be, and that the world created by father would never fit me. That I would never be able to just obey his wishes. That, in some time, I would finally break.

I'm sorry, and I love you. I'll always love you, mom. I hope you'll still love me after all of this.

In the end, we will meet again.

Your loving son,

Neil

Ms. Perry put the letter down gently on the bench and stood up. She crossed the porch, and soon her feet met delicate grass that decorated her garden. Heavy rain was pouring over her head, mixing with burning tears streaming down her cheeks. She fell to her knees, and a voice she never knew she could produce escaped her mouth. She screamed at the top of her lungs; she screamed to the world, to God, to her husband, to her son. To her sweet, generous son, her baby. How could she let this happen? How could she kill her own son?

Her son... Neil... he should be here... *he's here, what are you talking about?*

He's here... Neil's here...

He...

Chapter End Notes

Please forgive me for this :(

Chapter 3: Cameron

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Dear Cameron,

I know we never spent that much time together and I can't stress enough how much I regret it. I know we all gave you a hard time, especially Charlie, but I need you to know how I enjoyed and cherished our friendship. You were always the responsible one in the group, making sure we wouldn't get in trouble, or get ourselves hurt because of some crazy plan that involved jumping from the windows or whatever. We often mocked you for being 'stiff' or 'boring', but please know that I never thought you were one of those things. Okay, maybe at first, when I met you, I thought you were, but then I got to know you better and realized how cool you are. You're sarcastic, smart, caring (we both know you are, you won't hide it under your tough guy disguise), and even though you sometimes speak before thinking what you say (like that one time you called Todd a 'stiff'), you're really a great friend. And you can't possibly know this, but you're pretty funny when you're drunk. Weirdly clingy, but you tell the best jokes, even better than Charlie's (don't let him know that. Or do, someone has to decrease this ego of his). I can't count how many times you helped me with school since we met each other; if it wasn't for you, I didn't know if I would pass 8th grade. I've never appreciated you enough for all that you've done for me. And I know it's too late, and I won't be there to tell you this in person, but I'm so grateful for your friendship. For every late evening studying trig together in the common room. For every time you covered for me, Charlie, or basically everyone. For joining Dead Poets Society even though you knew how risky it was. For sticking with us and still being our friend after all the shit we gave you. I'll never be able to repay you.

I wish we had more time together. I wish I had the opportunity to get to know you more. Do you realize that we have known each other since we were twelve, but we don't even know our favorite movies? Or maybe it's just me, you seem to know all about us, though we ungracefully excluded you so many times. You're quite an observant, just like Todd. Maybe the two of you would bond more after I'm gone? You're both actually very similar to each other, even if you don't realize that. If there's to be one good thing from all of this, I hope it would be your friendship with Todd. You both need each other. Please, be there for him when I'm not anymore. It's a lot to ask from me, especially since I already owe you, but you need to do this for me. You have to care for him, from me.

Right now, I would probably write something poetic, but I know you were never really into poetry. You tagged along with us for company, and I'm so happy you did. I never told you this, but the group is incomplete without you, Cameron. You're a missing piece to our puzzle: to my dramatics, to Charlie's chaos, to Meeks and Pitts' experiments, to Knox's hopeless romanticism, and to Todd's poetics. Even Charlie knows that you're one of us. He won't admit it, but he sees you as a friend, too. He also acts like a tough guy, while being soft on the inside.

Please, remember what I asked you for. And never forget that you belong with us. With the Poets. We all love you. I love you. Forgive me for never showing you what you mean to me.

In the end, we will meet again.

*Your friend,
Neil*

Cameron leaned his head on the stone cold wall and let the tears stream down his face. He was sitting in the luggage room, the same where he was punched by Charlie, where he had to look his friends in the eyes and tell them he betrayed them. But he did it for Neil. For his friend, whom he loved so much. For Neil, who always cared for him, who made sure to include him, even if Charlie whined and begged them to just drop Cameron and have fun by themselves. He saw Cameron as one of them. As one of the Poets. Neil cared so much for others, even when he himself was drowning. And Cameron never noticed that. He also took Neil's friendship for granted.

Neil... oh my God, what have I done?

Chapter End Notes

I love Cameron redemption arc, but maybe not under these conditions :(

Chapter 4: Pitts

Chapter Summary

Tw: brief mention of anxiety (not graphic, just a mention)

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Dear Pitts,

Do you remember the day when we first met? It was in 8th grade, and you just transferred to Welton. I recall Charlie running to me and the guys and saying: 'The new guy is a freaking monster! He's as tall as the Empire State Building'. And when I saw you I knew he was right; you were taller than most of the teachers. With your bulky posture I imagined you to have a really low voice, but then you spoke to us, and it was so soft and kind. Of course it did get lower throughout the years, but it never lost that softness it always had. Seeing you for the first time I would never believe that such an angelic and kind soul hides underneath. You were so nice to everyone, even when half of the class was throwing snarky comments at you for being so tall (we were still those stupid insecure kids, but you never seemed to be phased by that). You got along with everybody so well and perfectly matched our chaos, especially Charlie's. He was your first roommate and I was so scared for you, because I knew that Charlie is a lot to deal with. But you guys had so much fun, creating havoc in your room every single night. You fit so well, like you were always with us. The same happened with Todd later, so I like to believe it was the comforting atmosphere of our group that worked the magic, but it was probably just you two being so great that you pulled us towards you, not the other way around. I told Cameron that he and Todd are very similar, but, in some way, you guys are too; you're both rather quiet compared to the rest of us, you always seem to be in your own world, and you're both probably the purest and kindest people I've ever met. I know you don't interact that much, mostly due to Todd's anxiety, but every time you do, it's so effortless for the both of you; you talk like you've known each other forever. Even Todd's stutter is better when he talks to you, compared to the rest of the poets. You radiate this kind of positive energy, this warmth, like first pecks of sunshine after a rainy day, that just draws people to you, makes them feel comfortable in your presence. You'd never hurt a fly, that's why everyone feels so safe around you. You're so comfortable with your kind and gentle side, but I think you don't even realize how truly sweet and caring you are. You always seem to know what the other person needs at the time; no

matter if it's a conversation, a hold of a hand, a hug, laughter, or screaming from the roof. Sometimes I wonder if you're from Earth, because some of the things you say shouldn't make sense, but they do. They always do. Your words always brought me comfort, despite if it was me rambling to you 'bout trig, my father or the puddle I stepped in walking back to school. And for that, my dear friend, I'll be forever grateful.

We haven't spent that much time one on one since last year when we roomed together, but I think that was never the issue for us. You and Meeks are like the two sides of the same coin, so it was natural of you two to become the inseparable duo. Me and Charlie always joked that we are brothers separated after birth, so I think it was also the obvious thing that we stuck together the most. And then Todd came, and I guess we became the inseparable duo like you and Meeks, while Charlie and Knox went on their shenanigans together. Cameron was kinda on his own, which I've always felt bad about, so please, make sure he feels more included, okay? But, back to the point, there were always smaller groups in our bigger group, but at the end of the day, we were all still so close to each other. And even if you and I were never a duo like you and Meeks or me and Charlie or Todd, it wasn't an issue, because we were so comfortable with each other. We could have only small talk interactions for weeks, but then, when we found each other the only two in the room, we would talk and laugh for hours and no end. Just like we've known each other forever. You always understood me, all of us, actually. (Again, I think you have some superpowers, there's no way you're a regular human being). You'll never know how much I'll miss those moments with you, even those when we sat in complete silence, but it was comfortable; we didn't need to talk to know exactly what the other one was thinking. That's why I think you're so alike Todd. I don't need to ask you to keep an eye on him, because I know you'll do that even without my word. That's just who you are. You care.

I love you so much, my brother. I loved being your friend. It was truly an honor that I'll never get the chance to repay.

Never lose that beautiful, kind heart of yours, not that I'm scared it would ever happen. But, just in case.

In the end, we will meet again.

Your friend,
Neil

Pitts grinned and cried at the same time while reading the letter.

Drops of water graced the beige paper, smearing the ink a little. Finishing the reading, he closed his eyes, relishing in the way the wind danced on his puffy cheeks. Rough surface of the trunk of a willow tree scratched his back, but he didn't mind. The only thing that mattered was the paper now laying in his lap.

He opened his eyes and looked at the sky. Tears were still pouring down his face, but he smiled.

It was an honor to be your friend, too.

Chapter End Notes

I love Pitts with all my heart.

Chapter 5: Meeks

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Dear Meeks,

I can't not write to you and don't mention the day you and I met. I arrived at Welton as this scared, skinny, insecure twelve year old. My father scorned me for crying; I was supposed to be a man now, living away from my parents, being responsible, studying diligently to get into Harvard. What a bunch of crap, right? How much of a man could I be at twelve? I was still just a kid who had to live in a completely new place with a bunch of strangers, without my parents and study for classes that were impossible to pass. I hoped that my dad would at least walk with me to my room, but he and mom left almost immediately after the ceremony. Something about 'learning to be a tough guy' or whatever.

So I walked to my dorm, nearly tripping on my feet from the weight of the suitcases, with puffy cheeks, red eyes and swollen lips. I entered the room and saw a short (or middle tall as you would say) kid with ginger hair and glasses. He was laying on the wooden floor, working on some pile of cables, wires and God knows what else. I didn't know what to say so I just stood there and waited for the kid to notice me. He eventually did, and the first thing he said was: 'Want to work with me on my new experiment?'

It was the weirdest and simultaneously the coolest thing ever. I stared at the kid, flabbergasted, and then I just nodded and sat next to him, even if I had no idea what I'm doing. We were working in a comfortable silence until Charlie barged into the room and called us a couple of nerds. The kid seemed so unfazed by it; he adjusted his glasses and started telling Charlie about some scientific stuff I couldn't understand. At that moment I knew we will be friends and that everything's going to be okay.

That kid was you, Steven, but you know that. I fell in love with your antics basically the second I met you, we all did. As Charlie had so gracefully said, you are the definition of a cool nerd; if it was any other person, Charlie would tease the shit out of them. But Charlie has always admired your intelligence, your wit, and most importantly, your sarcasm. You know how he's giving Cameron a hard time for him being a know-it-all, following the rules and all that, but that was never the case with you. You've always been our cool nerd, the one whose IQ is above the average, but at the end of the day would go and do the stupidest shit with you. I wasn't surprised

when your full mischievous potential was discovered when you roomed with Charlie, but honestly, he does that to everyone. Even Cameron kind of, I truly didn't believe he would join the Society. That's what living with Charlie does to a man.

I've also always admired your intelligence, but not as much as your kindness and understanding. By now, I'm convinced you're a psychic or something, because you can read people so well, it's scary. You always seemed to know what a person is going through without them saying a word. You would see me after a call with my father and wrap me in a tight hug, not needing to ask any questions. You know when to speak and when to shut up and give someone their time, when to approach them or leave them alone. And you always know what to say, even if the person is not the happiest to hear it. You always tell the truth, and that's so admirable. As much as I got frustrated countless times of you telling me my bullshit to my very own ears, I'm so happy you did, because you were always right. When you told someone they're a dick, you had every reason to do so, and at the end that person had to admit that. Sometimes, I was even jealous of this; I wished I'd been more courageous to speak the truth, but I've always been a coward. I lied, and I lied, and all of those lies brought me to the place I'm at right now. I'd never be like you, because there's only one Steven Meeks, and he's one of the best people I've had the privilege of knowing and being a friend of. I told Pitts that there were smaller groups in our friend group, but that never stood in the way of all of us being basically brothers. I loved those days when you and I would go to the library together, or work on some new radio or radar, or anything when Pitts wasn't around. I loved having even the smallest moments with you, because they were always so special. You were not only my first roommate at Welton; you were my best friend besides Charlie, but he doesn't count. You've always supported me, even when we both know I'm doing something very stupid. You never doubted me, even when I couldn't stop doubting myself. And you've always been there for me, and I'm so, so sorry I'd never return that favor.

Please, don't change, my friend. I know that one day you'll be some crazy genius professor who'll create another Frankenstein's monster or something, and it hurts me so much that I wouldn't be here to embrace you when you get your Harvard or MIT diploma, when you work on some life-changing experiment, or chant another crazy-ass poem in the cave.

Time to inherit the Earth, Meeks. The world's in your hands. Don't forget me when you become rich and famous, remember where you came from. A bunch of nerds reading poetry to each other in a damp cave.

I love you, even if I didn't show it to you enough. I'll always love you,

genius.

In the end, we will meet again.

*Your friend,
Neil*

Meeks was sitting at the roof, his and Pitts' radio on the cold floor, near his lap. 'It's been a long, long time' was currently playing, and Meeks couldn't help but cry even harder. He barely saw anything through his wet glasses, but he didn't care. He didn't want to see the world without Neil in it.

He folded the letter neatly and hid it in his pocket. He was angry; at Neil, at the world, at himself. If he'd been so good at understanding people, why didn't he notice that it got so bad? Why didn't he notice that Neil was drowning, that his dam was breaking and breaking, more and more, every single day?

You should be inheriting the Earth, Neil. You should be the one to do great things, to seize the day, to live your life extraordinarily. So, I'll do everything in my power to make you proud.

I'll never forget you. Not in a million years.

Chapter End Notes

:(

I was thinking if I should make Neil also write one letter to all of the poets, but I still don't know. Let me now what you think of it.

To the next time! <3

(Also, again forgive me for this work. It will get even sadder, so prepare yourselves)

Chapter 6: Knox

Dear Knox,

You've always been the romantic one of our group, so instead of love, I will be writing about logic. It was logical for me, when we first met, to become your friend. You were this kind, funny, considerate boy that got along with everyone. Our professors loved you, but you weren't a teacher's pet (although, at first, Charlie thought you were). No one was resistant to Knox Overstreet's charm (Charlie may think he's got the charm, but he's too much of a troublemaker to fool the teachers). Neither was I. I totally fell for your kindness and goofiness. I remember when we roomed for two years, and having you as a roommate was like winning in a lottery. You always cleaned after yourself (Todd, I'm looking at you and your crumpled up pieces of paper scattered all across our floor, or your socks and underwear in my freaking bed, Charlie), didn't snore (Pitts), didn't scold me for doing anything after lights out (Cameron), or didn't rope me into a midnight hunt for new experiment materials (Meeks). The only thing I could complain about was you crying on my shoulder whenever some girl from town rejected you. But honestly, it's hard to complain even about that. I loved being your emotional support, as you were mine so often, too. You never laughed at me for whining over stupid things, because for you, there was no stupid thing to cry about (maybe except if you were Charlie). We would tease you for being so crazy about the love stuff, but you were still there for us whenever any of the poets had a crisis about something much, much smaller. You would never call us dramatic or foolish; instead, you were always the one to comfort each and every one of us, either with a pat on the shoulder or a hug, making us chuckle with your stupid dad jokes I'm sure you got from Charlie. I'd go through a million Chrises if it meant being able to be comforted by you once more. You radiate this warm, positive energy that makes people naturally trust you, and it's a true gift. I don't think you even realize this, but it is. You're a gift, and my heart aches that I won't be around anymore to appreciate it.

I've never told you that, but I really loved your poem for that one Mr. Keating's class. I know we all made fun of you about it (as you kind of deserved it), but it was truly beautiful. Simple, yet holding so much meaning. You were never ashamed of your romantic side, and I admire you so much for it. Other boys would never let their sensitive side be seen, always pretending that they're not emotional and that they don't care about love, objectifying girls, but you were never one of them. When you love, you love with all your heart and that's beautiful. And yes, what you did to Chris at that party it's inexcusable (sorry my friend, but you need a

reminder of that incident every once in a while, for your own good), but we all know that you always give all of your soul when you're moved by emotions. You also never quit, despite any obstacle that's thrown your way; it's scary sometimes (Chris, again), but that's also another amazing thing about you. When you care about something, you don't get the cue when to quit. I guess we share that trait. I couldn't give up on acting, and I think you all knew it. You all knew that nothing would stop me, not even my father. I couldn't let that go, I still can't. I can't go on another day if I'm being taken away from the only thing that makes sense, the only thing that matters. At some level, I know neither of you will be surprised. You know me too well. You know what acting means to me. And you know how I've been feeling about my father's plan for my life. I think it wouldn't shock any of you that I just couldn't take anymore of it. You said something similar about Chris, at that one Poets meeting, when Charlie brought his saxophone. Well, acting for me is like Chris for you.

Love is such a wonderful thing. I've always wanted to love someone. To hold them in my arms, to take care of them. To be there for them whenever they need me. But I've never given much thought about it. I guessed it would come with time. I was still young, didn't see the need to desperately search for someone, not that us being in a boarding school made it easy to start a relationship. I just channeled my love into my friendship with you guys, and into my passions, which weren't a lot since my father didn't let me do anything fun or creative. But then I found acting. And, for the first time in my life, I learned how it's like to love something, to adore something so much. I can't live without love, so if my love is being ripped away from my hands, it isn't life anymore. Not for me.

God, I really went melodramatic on that last bit. Now I deserve to be snickered at. But that's the truth. The harsh truth that still hasn't fully registered in my brain, I guess. I wished the reality was different; I wish I didn't care that much, I wish I could just shrug my shoulders and go on with my life, finding myself a new, boring hobby that wouldn't bring me real joy, but would please my father. But it's impossible. I know it sounds ridiculous, I'm only seventeen, so what can I know about life and love? I'm young, and stupid, and naive, and I'm making a fuss about nothing. What real adult would be willing to take their own life for something so childlike, for some bouncing on the stage wearing idiotic costumes and making a fool out of myself. And maybe the people thinking that are right, maybe I am a stupid kid that's got fucked in the head and can't even wait a few years to get away from his father's grip and start to live on their own, but for me, even those several years are like a death sentence. If it doesn't happen now, I'm sure it will happen sooner or later. I can't possibly be happy without acting. It was the only thing that, apart from you guys, made my life meaningful.

I'm sorry, Knox, I didn't mean to go so sappy at the end. And dammit, I said I won't be writing about love. But I needed to get it all off my chest, and I think you'll understand me the most. You're also so passionate about the things you love, so I guessed you'd know how it feels like.

I hope everything will work out with you and Chris. I noticed you guys together in the audience. I'm actually kind of surprised she didn't rip you apart after that stunt you pulled on her, but as I said, no one is resistant to Knox Overstreet's charm. I'm so happy for both of you. You deserve to experience love, my friend. Just don't throw it away. Cherish it with all your heart. It's the only thing that makes sense, so appreciate it as long as you can.

I love you too, my friend. Remember that, please. Maybe sometimes you'll look up at the sky and think of me, so, please, remember in those moments that I love you. All of you. You were my family, my newfound family that loved me and accepted me for who I am, with all my flaws, and dramatics; in the good days, and in the bad days. I'll always be there for you, looking after all of you, making sure you're living your life the way I couldn't. And making sure neither of you stalks a girl in that shameless way you did.

I'll miss you so much. Hope I can get some of your love up there. I'm sure I could get some use of it if I'm about to take care of you guys or whatever.

Love courageously, Knoxious.

In the end, we will meet again.

*Your friend,
Neil*

Knox was full on sobbing, clutching his bedsheets tight between his fingers. The letter disappeared somewhere under his thin, school-issued blanket. He was sitting on a bed in his dorm, his roommate luckily being away. Chris's glove lay next to him on the pillow; she left it after that Poets meeting on the night of Neil's play. Suddenly, he felt guilty, all of it caused by that stupid glove. He was so focused on chasing Chris these last few months that he completely neglected his friend. How absent his mind had to be to not notice that Neil was slipping away from them? He needed their love and support so desperately, but they were so stuck on other, nonsensical things that they didn't pay attention to their friend falling into himself. Or maybe it was him. Maybe it was just him who didn't notice? Who didn't care?

He lay down on the bed, holding the glove close to his chest, not sure

if he wanted it to bring him comfort, or pain.

How can I love anything again, if love was something that took you away from me?

Chapter 7: Charlie

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Dear Charlie,

I have no idea how to start this letter. What can I even say? What do you say to your best friend since you were both six years old, to your literal brother, in a suicide letter? Maybe that I hope you're not too angry at me. I still remember the day you saw my scars for the first time, and you were really furious. We were both thirteen, and I had just finished an argument with my father, something about my grades slipping off or whatever. I locked myself in the bathroom, and sat down on the cold tiles, crying. I was so fucking tired, so tired of listening to him yelling at me for such stupid things, for constantly calling out my "failures". I had felt so bad for months, since we both got into Welton basically, but this was too much. I noticed a razor on the sink, so I walked over and took it. I spun it in my hands for a while, scared to do what I was thinking about, but finally, I gave in. It stung, like a bee, maybe a little bit sharper, but then I felt a relief wash over me. I don't know why it felt so good to see my own blood appear on my arm, to feel that stinging pain. Maybe because I thought that was what I deserved. I was such a disappointment, so maybe the only thing I should be feeling was pain. And I knew my father would be mad at me for doing such a thing, so it was like an act of rebellion against him. Knowing that I'm doing something he'd hate, taking revenge on him by destroying my own body. I did it once, but you still found out when I went back to Welton after the weekend. I'd never seen you so raging, so disappointed, and I felt so guilty, because I didn't want to let you down. Tears sprung in the corners of my eyes, and you immediately ran to me to embrace me. You hugged me so tightly, the way I'd never been hugged before (maybe only by mom when I was little; she stopped hugging me like that a long time ago). You said you're not angry at me, but at my dad, and I wanted to believe you, but I still felt like deep down you also see me as a disappointment. My father's effect, I guess. You made me promise I'd never do that again, and I swore. But we both know I didn't keep my promise.

But enough talking about that. I don't want my last words to you being me pitying myself. I don't want you to remember me from all of the shit that happened, and all of the things I did to myself. Maybe it's selfish, but I want you to remember me as that happy-go-lucky guy I tried to be. I tried to be that "golden boy" everyone expected me to be, always smiling, polite, getting straight A's, cheering everyone up whenever they needed to. I really

tried. But I can't go on anymore. I'm not that guy, and if there's only one person to know the true me, that would be you. You've seen me at my worst too many times to fall for the lie I tried to keep up since I can remember. And I'm so mad at myself that I fucked up even with that. I wanted to be an actor, yet you could see right through me. I could never hide anything from you, and, honestly, it's kind of scary. I'm sure even the things I did try to hide from you, you already know. There's nothing in our friendship that could stay undercover. And I'm sorry I didn't trust you enough to let you into my brain, or my heart. It's not your fault, I didn't let you in on purpose. I didn't want to be a burden, a disappointment, a fucking fragile thing that needs to be handled with a special care. I thought that everyone would be better if I just kept it to myself. Boys don't cry, or something like that, right? Maybe on some level I thought I would feel better with myself if I just met everyone's expectations. If I fake it good enough for everybody else, maybe I'd fake it to myself too. Maybe it'll become real. But it didn't.

Fuck, I wasn't supposed to pity myself. I can't even do one thing right (okay, I'll stop!). I just wanted to say how much I value your friendship. You are not only my best friend; you are my brother, the one I've never had. From the day we first met, I knew it would be something that will last my whole life. Only I hoped we would get old together, all wrinkles and skin dotted with age spots, aching, twisted limbs. We would still cause mayhem, even the stupid bingo game wouldn't be boring with us. We would be the cool uncles for each other's children, and even cooler granddads. My heart hurts so much at the thought that it would never become true. What would I do for it to be true.

I love you so freaking much. I have loved you since you introduced yourself to me at the playground those eleven years ago. Every moment spent with you, every trouble we both got into together, all the chaos we have created, I cherished it with all my heart. You showed me how to be loved and accepted no matter what; you showed me what unconditional love looks like (but you're a natural, right? The chief professor of love?). You and the guys became my family in the place where I felt I had no one. I will be forever grateful for what all of you did for me. I'm sorry it's not enough to keep me alive. There's just too much pain that will never really go away, I'm afraid. It's not only about acting, really. I thought it was, but I might just have realized that there's so many more layers underneath. There's years of pretending to be someone I'm not every single day; every single day trying to meet my father's expectations and to feel a little less of a disappointment. Years of something I thought was love and care, but really was blatant abuse. Years of depriving myself of doing, or even dreaming about the things I love, thinking I'm doing this for a higher cause; if not for my father, then for my dear mother, she would be so happy if I became a

successful doctor. But I can't do it, Charlie, I just can't. Everything's suddenly too much, and I think it will never change. Maybe I'm fucking crazy, maybe it's my insane brain telling me all of those things, maybe tomorrow I'd think differently, but I won't last until tomorrow. I just can't do it anymore.

I can't ask you to promise me your forgiveness, because I broke my promises too many times. I can just hope you won't hate me after this. And even if you do hate me, that you would be able to meet my only request: take care of the guys. Especially Todd. He's too pure, too gentle for this world. I know he has it in him to break out, to find his voice, he's already doing so well, but he needs support. He needs reassurance. Need someone to be there for him when I'm no longer around. Please, that's the last thing I will ever ask you to do. You have to do this, if not for me, then for him. And take care of yourself, too. That's technically two things I'm asking for, but who would care for technicalities right now. I know we both share the unhealthy tendency to get ourselves into trouble, but please, don't do anything rash or stupid. Keep sucking the marrow out of life, but don't choke on the bone.

There's so much more to say, but so little time left. Saying goodbye to you is one of the hardest things I ever had to do. Can't wait until I see that stupid smirk of yours once again.

I love you so much.

In the end, we will meet again.

Your brother,

Neil

Charlie wished he could hate Neil. He really wanted to hate him. But, of course, he couldn't. He loved him even more, if that was even possible. But Neil wasn't there anymore to hear it. Charlie wondered, from his spot in front of the desk, in his new school, where he could be. Is he like those ghosts in the stories, walking through the walls, levitating in the air, moving stuff on the shelves for fun. Is he *anywhere*, in particular? Charlie wasn't the most religious person, but Neil couldn't just *disappear*, right? He must be somewhere. People like him don't just stop *existing*.

Charlie was angry at everything; everything, besides Neil. He could never be truly mad at him. His eyes and throat were red and sore from

all the crying, his knuckles still remembered the shape of Cameron's jaw, and arms still searched frantically for Todd's fragile body. *I am the disappointment. I was supposed to take care of them, and I let you down. What kind of a brother am I?*

I hope they treat you right in Heaven, because I'll give you so much shit for what you did, Neil, no matter how much I love you.

It would be many more years until he'd make his signature smirk again.

Chapter End Notes

don't hate me pls :(

Chapter 8: Mr. Keating

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Dear Captain,

I still remember so well every thought I had during my first class with you. First, bewilderment, curiosity, then a little bit of fear and discomfort when you mentioned that we will all just turn cold and die. It's hauntingly fitting now. Of course, I knew I would die, like every other person on this planet, but that thought always scared me. The thought that one day, just like that, I would just stop breathing. That all I've done in my life won't matter in the end. My every accomplishment, every dream I followed, every person I've met, all the impact I had on this world, even if I had the littlest one, it won't matter anymore as I take my last breath and close my eyes for the very last time. So many times I've heard others say that young people think they're immortal. That they don't think they'll ever die. Death doesn't concern them. I think there's some truth in that saying. People my age don't think about death that much, because we feel we have so much time left. Years, decades, to find out what we actually want from life. So much time to figure ourselves out. I thought I had so much time. So much time to escape my father's plan for my life and to listen to my heart. So much time to start living. And then we restarted the Dead Poets Society, and for the first time in my life I realized that I don't have to wait for my life to start. I can start living now. You showed me what life is truly about, what really matters, what we should aspire to. All those years, silently obeying my parents' wishes, I just needed a voice that would guide me in complete darkness. You were that voice. You were the reminder that every day is priceless, and that we should seize it while we can, because there's no guarantee we'll survive till the sun sets again.

So, I seized the day. I did what I really wanted to do. I listened to my heart. I told you that acting is everything to me, and I wasn't lying. It is, it's my whole life. Without it, there's no me, there's no Neil. Without it, there's only a copy of me, a lifeless shell of a human that cannot even make decisions for himself. A puppet in the hands of a cruel master. That's who I was for the past seventeen years. I can't go on another 10, maybe 20, or who knows how many more, crushed under my father's tight grip. We both know he'll never let me be who I want to be, who I chose to be. It was never my choice to make.

At the end of the lesson, I felt one more thing: hope. Hope for a life that I

couldn't even dare to imagine for myself. Life that wasn't mine to have. But those two simple words, *carpe diem*, were like a lifeline. A rope thrown to a drowning man. I've been drowning without realizing it, since I could remember, and for those past few months I felt like I could breathe again. But my father once again dragged me underwater and I'm afraid there's no escape anymore.

I'm really sorry, Mr. Keating. I know it's not what you were trying to teach us. You told us to seize our lives, not end them. But I can't go on, not like this. Not when I finally felt how it's like to be alive, how it's like to be who you were destined to be. My father's plan is not my destiny. I could obey him, act as a perfect doctor, perfect son. In the end, this is what I wanted to do, right? Act. I could become who he wants me to become. We all die, and it won't matter at my deathbed. But if I'm granted many years of lifetime, it just means many years of suffering. Many years of pain and pretending to be someone I'm not. Again, it probably wouldn't matter. I'd hopefully be happy in the afterlife. Who would care about not becoming an actor while they're in Heaven? But it's just too much for me, Mr. Keating. Is that really life if you just accept the suffering? Maybe for some people, but I'm not that strong. If I'm about to die anyway, I want to go now, when I've done what I wanted to. I seized the day for the first and last time. If that was my last chance to seize my life, what's the point in continuing it? And I know what you'd say, you would say that when I turn 18 I can do whatever I want, that I just have to survive a little bit more and then I'd have my life for myself. But he would always find a way to make it a living hell, he'd always have me in handcuffs, my wrists tied and my mouth glued shut, listening to his orders like a loyal servant. I can't do this. If I don't go now, it's only a matter of time when I actually do this. I'm starting to think that this is my destiny.

At our first meeting, I read a Tennyson poem. It went something like this: "For my purpose holds to sail beyond the sunset". I know I was made for something bigger my father had planned for me, and if I cannot fulfill it, I have to go find it. Find it where human eyes don't reach.

Thank you for everything, Mr. Keating. Thank you for showing me what truly matters. Thank you for being the father figure I wish I had. And I'm sorry that I put your teachings to such a bad use. I'm sorry for disappointing you. You're probably the last person I'd want to disappoint, but I know it will happen no matter if I leave or if I stay. I always disappoint those who I love.

Please, continue to be the inspiration to other kids like me. God knows how many of them need to hear you say those two sacred words. But don't tell every one of them about Dead Poets Society. It won't be so magical if you

do. And please, look after my friends, look after Todd. You were the first person that saw the real him. The first who showed him what he's truly capable of. Thank you for finding his barbaric YAWP. I know he'll do wonderful things under your wing.

Carpe diem, Mr. Keating. Don't forget to seize the day yourself.

In the end, we will meet again.

*Your devoted student,
Neil*

Mr. Keating gripped the letter tightly in his hands. He looked around from behind the waves of fresh tears, taking up his surroundings. The classroom he used to love, that filled him with so much passion, now seemed daunting. It wasn't the same anymore; nothing was the same. In the corner of his eye he saw boxes, prepared for him packing away. He had no idea if he would ever teach again, but it didn't matter at that moment; what mattered was that Neil was gone. *He* was the reason Neil was gone. *He* encouraged him, and all the boys, to follow their dreams, to *seize the day*. Those words that once were so beautiful to him, so hopeful, were now sour, bitter, almost burning on his tongue. *Of course* he knew that Neil's heart had been irreversibly broken, the moment he saw Neil's face in the window of his father's car. In those eyes he saw that the usual light was gone, all the life that filled Neil to the bone, had been sucked out. But maybe, just maybe, if he weren't so fixated on that stupid *carpe diem* thing, if he just listened to what Nolan had been telling him all this time... if he just taught him Dr. Pritchard, like he was supposed to do, prepared them for college and nothing more, maybe Neil would still be here today, sound asleep in his bed, preparing for another day of classes.

I'm so sorry, Neil. You had your whole life ahead of you. I'm so sorry that the heart which deserved love the most, had been ripped off of it. I'm sorry you didn't have a chance to truly live.

Chapter End Notes

I think we all know who will be the next letter...

Chapter 9: Todd

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Dear Todd,

Let me start with saying that it was never my intention to hurt you. To leave you. I'd rather rip my heart out of my chest and burn it, than make your own heart ache. And it kills me to know that at this very moment, I'm doing exactly that.

You appeared in my life in the most unexpected, yet most important moment of my life. For so many years I've felt like I was drowning, slowly, my head sinking by every millimeter. I was slowly dying, agony long gone, leaving behind only an overwhelming emptiness. And then, you came into the picture, with your downturned eyes, shy smile and stutter, and I felt like I could breathe again. The world that used to be in black and white turned into color again. I don't know what it was exactly that drew me to you, but I feel like there was some invisible string pulling me to you. Or you to me. I love all our friends, their very different personalities, but I guess I've always been missing something. Missing that one piece that turned out to be you. Your creativity, your words dripping from your tongue like honey, your kindness, selfishness, your ability to hold me back when I'm getting way ahead of myself. Everything about you fills up an empty space within me. You always fear you're taking up too much space, always apologizing for existing, but you've never taken too much space; on the contrary, every crevice of my being needed to be filled by you, by your heart and soul. It breaks my heart that you think so little of yourself, because you don't realize how truly special you are. How significant you are to my life. If it weren't for you, I'd always feel that emptiness inside of me, I'd never feel such a deep connection with another human. I've always had the closest relationship with Charlie, but he was always like a brother to me. With you... I don't know, but you are so, so special to me, and it's high time you recognize that. You and the guys made me feel loved, made me feel special, as if my existence actually meant something. With my dad, I always felt like I'm living for him, for his dreams and expectations for me, and not really for myself. I was a player in his game of unfulfilled wishes. I was a manifestation of everything he didn't manage or wasn't given an opportunity to achieve. Sometimes I think it was the only reason he wanted to have a kid: so he could live a second life through me. But how can I do that if I can't even bear my own life?

But with you, I felt like I could live a thousand lives. You didn't expect anything from me, you didn't wish for me to be a certain someone. You were my friend with no terms of conditions. And, as a person who deals with such pressure too, you made me feel seen and understood. You never told me to shut up, to not make such a fuss about things or to stop caring. You would always hear me out, letting me talk for hours on end, and knowing so damn well when to not say anything but to sit with me and offer me a shoulder to cry on. What would I do to lay on your shoulder again. I haven't felt such comfort that I felt in your presence for a very long time.

I can imagine you right now. You're probably sleeping, tired after the day of classes and the play. You have this peaceful expression on your face, no sign of the familiar frown you wear every day. Your hair is ruffled in this cute manner, and you're drooling on your pillow (don't try to deny it, I have valid proof you do that). Fuck, you're making me doubt if I even want to do what I'm planning on doing. But, I just can't, Todd. I can't do this any longer. I can't keep pretending I'm okay, I can't keep playing a dutiful son, I can't keep chasing his dreams. And I know it won't end until one of us is gone. And I know it has to be me.

It's not your fault, Todd. I'm saying this, because I know you blame yourself for anything. You did everything you could. You gave me so much time, so much love and happiness and memories, and everything I'm holding onto even now. You gave me a forever in an unspoken promise, because I know if I didn't do what I'm about to do, we would be in each other's lives forever. I can only wish for being the very smallest part of your further life after I'm gone. I got too comfortable in your life, in your heart, so please, let me stay with you. Because I will stay with you no matter what. There was nothing you could do to save me, as you already have. You saved me. I just couldn't manage to save myself.

There are so many things I wish to say, but I only have so little time. Some things are better left unspoken, I guess. Some of them I'm not ever sure of myself. But I want you to know how much you meant to me. You were the sun shining on my darkness, you were an oasis in the desert of my life. I could keep waxing poetry about you till the end of time, and it would never be enough. You are so magnificent, Todd Anderson. If soulmates really do exist, I think that's who you were to me. I've never found more solace in a person before. I've never felt as if a part of my soul was also a part of someone else's soul. You were the light in my life. Now it's time to shine this light on someone else's life.

Please, don't forget about me completely. And please, don't let me hold you back. Don't let my death hold you back. There are so many wonderful

things awaiting you, and I would never forgive myself if I were the reason you would never experience them. So, keep experiencing. Keep living. Seize the day.

If only I had a day, an hour, a minute more with you. But even a lifetime wouldn't be enough.

But don't you worry, Todd.

In the end, we will meet again.

*Yours,
Neil*

Todd's feet were dangling over the frozen surface of the lake. Wet snow was seeping through his pants as he sat on the dock, a place soaked with memories of him and Neil, but he couldn't find himself to care. His eyes were scanning the letter over and over, words and sentences carved in Todd's memory after so many times he had read it. The paper was crumbled after the force of Todd's grip. The landscape was as hauntingly beautiful as the day Neil had died, as though it was Neil's way of showing his presence. Todd liked to believe it had been so beautiful all for this beautiful boy that once graced the Earth with his existence.

Tears were freezing on Todd's cheeks, warmed only by new ones appearing over and over. He felt everything and nothing all at once; he didn't know what and how to feel. There were also so many things he wanted to say, but they wouldn't change anything. Neil was gone, and Todd had no power of bringing him back. No words, no smiles, no embraces could make Neil come back. And that was the hardest part.

Todd had to force everything inside of him not to go into Neil's steps. The only thing that was keeping him alive was keeping Neil's memory alive. He couldn't let it die with him.

He looked up, feeling freshly fallen snow on his skin. It was so peaceful. The pain surprisingly gave him some sort of comfort. He knew Neil wasn't truly gone, he couldn't have been. He was somewhere – where, Todd wasn't exactly sure. But it didn't matter at the moment. What mattered was that Todd could almost feel Neil's arms around himself.

A lifetime with you wouldn't be enough for me, either. I can't wait to see you again. But until then, I'll try to keep on living. You lived your whole life for others. Now is the time someone lived for you.

Chapter End Notes

Appearing after so many months only to drop this heartbreak of a bomb and disappear again.

I'm so sorry for this chapter, guys ☹ it *did* get worse.

Please forgive me

You can also check my tumblr: [joeytribbiani_18](#), I pretend to be funny there

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!